

She lied by TheCrazyFriend

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Characters: Billy Hargrove, Calvin Powell, Dustin Henderson, Eleven | Jane Hopper, Jim "Chief" Hopper, Jonathan Byers, Joyce Byers, Lucas Sinclair, Maxine "Max" Mayfield, Nancy Wheeler, Robin (Stranger Things), Steve Harrington, Will Byers

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Saturday 9th April 1988

"Only a few hours to go" Lucas looked up at the clock on the Byers' wall with an air of anxiety

"Ugh. We don't need the commentary, Lucas, we know what the time is, and we know what the date is too" Will grumbled. It had been seven hundred thirty days since four members of The Party had just vanished into the night, one day off the two year anniversary and in two short hours it would be two years exactly

"Fuck" Dustin looked down sadly. Yes, Lucas and Will were still around, as were Steve, Nancy, Jonathan, Robin, Erica, and Joyce but Mike, Max, Jane and Hopper had vanished. Will had heard from Jane and he had relayed the message on to the rest of The Party but that was all a distant memory

It's been two years! Will's normally quiet mind screamed out at him, *no news no nothing, they're all probably so well hidden that the government wouldn't be able to find them if they tried.*

Will knew the remaining members of the party would be joining them for the hardest day and that they would do what they had done the previous two years, face it, together

Monday 23rd May 1988

"Elli, sweetheart, can you hear me??" Max was sat next to Jane in the back of Hopper's truck, shaking her hand gently. Jane was sat slumped against the truck door and seat and remained unresponsive to Max's gentle pleas. "Dad, Dad, what's wrong with Elli?!" Max pleaded with the man whose knuckles had gone white around the steering wheel, her eyes filled to the brim with tears

"Shall we just get out of Indiana?" Hopper replied quietly, Max nodded and fell silent, pulling Jane's limp body against her side and letting her rest against her.

"Rainbow. Kali. Mike. Eggos. Dad. Home. Maxxie. Girlfriend. Love." Max gently pulled her hands through Jane's hair listening to her girlfriends' broken record.

"Oh, Elli I'm gonna kill them"

Max's dark thoughts of murder, torture and revenge were interrupted

after a few moments by a male voice from somewhere in front of her.

"Eliza?"

"Mmmhmm?" She mumbled as a reply

"I think we ought to stop and get something to help Eleanor"

"Like what?"

"A car harness of some kind, I'm not sure that seatbelt is safe with her in that condition"

"Does such a thing even exist, Dad?"

"I don't know... presumably we can make something?"

"Oh shit, I'm not sure that's a good idea, right about now the police are..."

"Eliza, you're amazing!"

"I... I am?"

"I completely forgot about my police scanner, it's in bag three"

"Pull over in the next town then, I'll get the supplies you get the scanner" Max couldn't help but be relieved that Hopper had been so well prepared for the day when they had to flee Hawkins

"Alright"

They passed the sign of what town it was without really caring. It was late, they had been driving for a few hours and still had a long drive to get to Canada before they could stop and rest and they didn't really want to waste time. Hopper pulled over in the outskirts of town, gave Max one of the several handguns they had and sent her off to find a hardware store. It didn't take long for Max to recognize parts of where she was. *Oh shit!!* She dived down the nearest alley and stopped, putting her hands on her knees, trying desperately to calm herself. *Shit fuck shit shit!!* Max was on the verge of a panic attack though to her it felt more like a heart attack. "Great move, Dad!" She hissed to herself.

"Uh excuse me, sweetheart, are you okay?" a familiar voice asked *Oh jeez.* Max found herself frozen in fear at the sound of the woman who was hurrying up the alley towards her

"Sweetheart? I saw you dart down here all in a panic and I wanted to make sure you're okay" the kind voice she would have been relieved to hear had it been under any other circumstances. "Sweetheart?"

"I'm fine" Max managed to force the two words past the lump in her throat, "I'm fine" she repeated, trying desperately to calm herself from the nightmare she had found herself in.

"Why don't you come back to the store with me and I can get you a

nice tea?" Max shook her head at which the woman's voice became stern, "no sweetheart, you need tea." Max sighed, knowing it was pointless to fight. She turned her radio off and hoped that she wouldn't be gone long enough for her dad to charge in looking for her. *Hopefully when that doofus realizes where we are he'll stay put!* "Come on, sweetheart" the woman began leading Max by the wrist back to the familiar store

The penny dropped for Hopper when a familiar blue Camaro flew past his truck. *Oh... fuck. Fuck fuck fuck!!* He buried his head in the trunk as the powerful car slid past, to Hopper it was agonizingly slow. The car couldn't have taken more than three seconds to glide smoothly past the parked truck, around the corner and out of sight but Hopper felt the moment drag out for eternity. "Shit! Fuck shit fuck!" He ran around the truck and jumped in, plugging the radio back into the car. Sure enough, after he turned it to the correct frequency he heard familiar voices coming out of the radio. Instead of being relieved he picked up his gun, sprinted back to the trunk, pulled out two machine guns and carried them to the front of the car. He knew immediately they were on borrowed time and that he had to find Max and get them both out of town as quickly as possible. He slammed his foot on the throttle and drove towards town, hoping that his change of appearance would fool people for long enough to find his daughter and get out of town.

Jane had, without Max holding her up against her body, slumped back against the truck door. He realized that she was probably easily recognizable and so threw a blanket over her weakened form, not only to keep her warm but to hopefully hide her identity.

"Thank you for your kindness, but I really gotta get going" Max was doing everything she could to diplomatically escape the situation she found herself in

"Nonsense, I insist" she led Max into the shop as a truck screamed past the shop earning an eye roll from the kind woman.

"My dad is waiting for me" she exclaimed desperately, "we gotta get home as soon as possible" the woman's eyebrow rose in question, "or... or we'll miss our favorite TV show!"

"You just had a panic attack sweetheart, you need to take a few"

Max, resigned to her fate, sat down in the small staff area of the store. She slowly realized that it was an opportune chance to get the

list of supplies that they would need to make Jane's harness. "Fine... miss?"

"Oh, how rude of me, call me Joyce. Joyce Byers"

Fuck. "Nice to meet you, Joyce" the woman handed Max a chamomile tea and Max dared to look her in the eyes to thank her. "Thank you, Joyce"

"Excuse me I've just gotta go put the closed sign up, nearly time for me to lock up anyway"

"Okay..." Max sighed in relief, pulling the radio out once the woman had disappeared off, "Eliza to dad... I'm okay, just don't reply. I've been pressured into having a cup of tea but I'll meet you back where I left you okay? Get out of town dad, you know it's... not safe" she held down the transmit button until she switched the radio off

Joyce returned seconds later and if she had heard any of the radio monologue she didn't act like it. "You're out late?"

"Yeah." *Me and my dad just broke my girlfriend out of a psychiatric hospital where she was taken after being tortured into insanity...* "We had to go and visit some friends in another state, we're just passing through" *so I truly hope you don't recognize me.*

"Oh that sounds lovely, you're not alone then?"

"No, I'm traveling with my dad and sister"

"Family road trip?"

"Something" *nothing* "Like that." Max smiled and drunk a bit of her tea, the taste was too strong for her liking but she couldn't afford to be rude or admit that she didn't like chamomile. *Max hated chamomile!*

"How nice, so where do you live?"

"West of here" *too vague, Eliza!!* Max had gotten so used to using her fake name she even used it when berating herself

If her response made Joyce suspicious the older woman didn't show it, "What state if you don't mind me asking?"

"Cali" *shit!!* "fornia" the reply was out of her mouth before she could stop herself

"I hear it's a wonderful place to live?"

"It was... is"

Joyce's eyebrow rose, "okay sweetheart" she shook her head, "drink your tea"

"Can I ask for one small favor?" Max asked, her throat dry and her heart trying to tear itself from her chest from fear. When Joyce

nodded, Max held out the list she had written, "do you sell any of these items?" Joyce studied the list with confusion clear upon her face, "my sister, she's very disabled and she puked and... well it went all over her last car harness, naturally your average child seat doesn't fit my sister, she's my age. Sadly the old one had to be gotten rid of, the puke smelled awful" Max spun a tale as quickly as she could, drawing on the truth but twisting it so it was hopefully unrecognizable

"Of course sweetheart, I'll go gather these items for you now"

Thank fuck I wrote that list myself!! I don't think Mrs. Byers has ever seen my handwriting!!

Joyce was gone a fair amount of time and Max dared to peek out of the room into the store she never thought she'd see again. She saw a male who was taller than Joyce and who had very downcast eyes, as if he had been given terrible news and that it was taking him a long time to recover from it. Much to Max's surprise the woman almost seemed to know she was watching and waved her over. "This is..."

"Elizabeth"

"Elizabeth, she's from California and is passing through" Joyce watched the boy closely and that made Max suspect that she had been busted. "Elizabeth, this is my son, Will"

"Nice to meet you"

"Will has been helping me get the supplies you asked for"

"Thank you, Will"

"Mom, he went off with the rest of his friends again, I don't know when I'll see him again" Will seemed to be close to tears, and from the puffy look of his eyes he appeared to spend a lot of time crying

"I can... uh go back over there" Max gestured vaguely at the other side of the store

"Nonsense, my son is very open about his feelings for his best friend, Mike"

Immediately Max was incredibly interested in the conversation but knew she had to pretend she wasn't, pretend that she didn't know of the boy who had just been mentioned. "You're gay?" She blurted Will nodded, "Mike was my closest friend and almost boyfriend"

"What happened, if you don't mind me asking?"

Joyce and Will shared a look, "he went off to hunt down those people who murdered his ex with five of his ex's friends"

"Oh" Max honestly wished she could think of something else to say but her mind was drawing a blank. "I'm sorry, Will" she whispered

earnestly

"She was a real sweet girl" Joyce sighed

"I'm sorry for your loss" *They are testing me, I just know it!* Max nearly rolled her eyes at herself, *Stop it Eliza, you're being fucking paranoid* she scolded herself in exasperation

"Hey, where are the rest of the shitheads?" A handsome guy strolled into the store

Steve!! "Uh, hi" Max waved awkwardly

"Grieving. After Mike's news, it's been called into question whether the others survived"

"Others?" Max asked quietly. *Oh shit, they don't even know that Elli is alive!!*

"Three others were presumed to have been killed or kidnapped when Mike's ex was killed by her father"

"I saw a news report..." Steve began, "it uh stated about... that and well there was someone found. *There.*" He didn't usually act nervous but he was glancing at Max every few seconds, uncomfortable that she was there

"I... I'm just gonna go" Max picked up the supplies, throwing down a couple hundred dollar bills and sprinted for the door, right into the side of a blue Camaro. "Shit!" Max fell back but managed to cling on to the bags that held the harness supplies

"Watch where you're fucking going, kid!" The window had rolled down and the driver was bellowing at Max. His mullet hadn't changed a bit since Max had last seen him

"Easy there, Hargrove!" Steve had rushed out to join them, as had Will. "She's just a kid"

"Oh is she one of your brats, Harrington? Seventeen or eighteen I'd make it, she's old enough to have learned *respect and responsibility*"

Max had to suppress her shudder at those words, "Why would I respect you? I don't know you" she glared up at him for a second then jumped to her feet, grabbed the supplies and started to run off.

Billy wasn't done, he revved the engine and drove directly at Max as if he was going to mow her down. "Shit" Steve growled, running towards her to knock her out the way though he didn't get more than a few feet before a truck, the same one that had been hurtling around earlier slammed into the Camaro. Billy was lurched to the side and smacked his head on the window, cracking it as the muscle car spun uncontrollably and slammed into another car. The passenger door of the truck flew open and Max leaped in before anyone could stop her,

she shut the door and the truck drove off at speed, leaving several very bemused people standing in the middle of the road.

"Sorry, Eliza" Hopper grunted, "I guess I was more tired than I thought, I didn't even notice the sign saying Hawkins. Had I realized I wouldn't have stopped even if we both desperately needed the piss"

"It's okay, dad, you did what you had to do to protect your daughters" Max scrambled over the seats to join Jane in the back

"That bastard step-brother almost ran you over" Hopper had seriously considered shooting Hargrove at that moment but he knew they couldn't afford for him to do such a thing, they were attempting to get away unharmed and unseen. "Did J recognize you? I saw the Babysitter and Cleric were there too"

"If she did she didn't say anything to me." *Oh my god!!* "Dad, they're not even aware Eleanor is still alive!! They think we're all dead!!"

"Maybe we'll send them a postcard or something on the way back" hopper suggested, "let them know we're still alive?"

"Would that be safe?"

"Probably not but who cares" Hopper was feeling rebellious once again. "Though for safety's sake, we ought to use our Party names. Jimmy" Max snorted with laughter, "Zoomer and Mage"

"Maybe we ought to avoid including Eleanor for now"

"Maybe you're right, Max" Hopper rolled his eyes at Max who was still chuckling away at 'Jimmy'

"Steve. Explain." Joyce had walked straight up to him and demanded he explained his earlier comment

"Get the rest of The Party to meet me at my place and I'll show y'all then"

"Right. What about him?" Joyce indicated the smashed Camaro.

"He's a mullet wearing asshole but he's unconscious"

"Call 911" Will stated

Max and Hopper switched driving positions once they were out of Hawkins and Hopper looked after Jane though in the main he slept, completely exhausted from days worth of driving and very little sleep. "Oh for god's sake, dad!" Max threw a quarter at Hopper to wake him up, "you can sleep once we've got Elli secured in her

harness"

"I'm... sorry, Max" Hopper shook his head and sat up, pulling Jane closer to him not only to keep her safe but also to keep her warm. Max drove on into the night listening to Hopper try to soothe his daughter instinctively though deep down he knew it wouldn't do much good

Steve let the remaining party members into his huge house and indicated they all go through to the living room. "This may potentially be upsetting for some viewers" Steve warned, looking around and making sure he did a mental roll call to make sure everyone was there and to ensure that there were no unwanted additional guests he locked the doors and pulled the blinds down. Dustin sat next to Lucas and Will sat between Jonathan and Joyce, Nancy sat on Jonathan's other side. Robin waited for Steve to return to her side. The only party member noticeably absent was Lucas' younger sister Erica, a relief for the rest of the party as they all deemed her too young to be aware of the evil in Hawkins.

Steve pushed a VCR into the machine and returned to Robin's side, the VCR clunked and clicked a few times then a woman appeared on the screen. "And the latest in the Hawkins saga, a young woman was abandoned at the site of Hawkins National Laboratory, we'll go live to Hawkins"

The screen changed and a male news correspondent appeared among the gutted ruin of the place the entire Party loathed with an unbridled passion, Hawkins National Laboratory. "The only survivor found in the remnants of the lab was a girl who was about seventeen years old having seemingly been abandoned. She has been taken for assessment at Central State Hospital in Indianapolis while investigators attempt to piece together what has happened."

The Party looked at each other in disgust, "those sick fucking assholes!!!" Joyce screamed

"There's more" Steve interrupted so they could hear the rest of the news item

"Hawkins National Laboratory was not only the home to the MKUltra project which Terry Ives sued doctor Martin Brenner over and eventually lost her mind..."

"She did not lose her fucking mind!!" Dustin exclaimed

“Quiet!!”

“Was also the cause of Will Byers' disappearance and the death of Barbara Holland. We have here with us Chief Calvin Powell, the chief of police in Hawkins since the previous chief, James Hopper vanished two years ago. Hi, Chief Powell, am I to understand you made the rather chilling discovery?”

“Yes, Brett, I was the one to discover the young Jane Doe here at Hawkins National Laboratory. After the laboratory suffered an arson attack a number of months back, we have been trying to identify who started the fire and patrolling the area in case someone came back to finish what they started in November. I was patrolling when I found the young woman with nothing other than a hospital gown on. She was completely unresponsive to me and the EMT crews once they arrived and she was first bundled off to Hawkins General Hospital and was then moved to the psychiatric unit in Indianapolis”

“Thank you, Chief Powell”

“Those fucking assholes!!”

“That's sick!”

The TV had returned to the studio and the newsreader had picked up where the correspondent had left off. “We'll keep you up to date on this story and the other breaking news stories across Indiana as they come in”

Steve turned to look at the other members of The Party to find that the vast majority of them had left the room and retching noises indicated that they were making use of his bathrooms and probably the tubs as well to stop puke covering his carpets and couches. Robin was the only person who hadn't run off to hurl as she and Steve had already done so when they first saw the news report. “Jesus Christ” Jonathan was the first back in the room, wiping his mouth with his sleeve, “what gives, Stevie boy? How can these people be so fucked up in the head?”

“No idea, Jonathan”

Nancy was the second person to return, she crumpled in Jonathan's arms and cried, she had really liked Jane from the start and had become somewhat an older sister to the traumatized young girl once she had been released from Hopper's cabin in the middle of nowhere and had even been allowed to visit to help Hopper teach Jane what she needed to know in order to start school before she was allowed into the wider world. She didn't speak a word to any of the others

and simply sought comfort in Jonathan's arms

A stream of curses gave the assembled party members some clue as to whom had managed to get all their food from the day up the third quickest but to their surprise it was Joyce who walked through the door and she looked furious, ready to charge to the laboratory and finish Mike, Kali and the gang's effort to burn it down herself, she was holding on to the last remnants of her self-control. A sentiment shared by the rest of the party as they returned. Lucas, Will, and Dustin were using each other for mutual support in both senses of the word as the true horror of the purely evil nature of the head scientist became fully apparent. The three boys were hit the worst by the news and hadn't quite managed to get to the bathrooms before losing control of their stomachs, as a result, their shirts were stained by whatever they had eaten and Dustin was just pale-faced and wasn't even swearing. "What... the... fuck... what in the name of all that's fucking holy is wrong with that psychotic cunt?! Brenner is the worst fu..."

"We get the picture, Mrs. Byers, thank you" Steve sighed, they all knew every other member of The Party were thinking the exact same thing

"And now for the news" the reporter was different but they knew the news probably wouldn't be good. "In a shocking series of events we are going live to Central State Hospital in Indianapolis, hello, Brian, what's going on?"

"Well, I'm here at Central State Hospital in Indianapolis where a young woman was kidnapped and taken from the hospital in a strange turn of events. The girl, found in what remained of Hawkins National Laboratory was taken yesterday evening though nobody was hurt"

"Definitely not Brenner's men then" Dustin commented to general assent. They wondered if it was Mike and Kali's gang, they had no idea that Max or Hopper were still alive

Max pulled over at the side of the road once she had driven through a few towns, "come on dad let's get her secured" she whispered as Jane had fallen asleep, Hopper nodded and extracted himself from the tangle of arms he found himself in having gotten himself in a tangle by himself. He and Max worked quickly to create a harness for Jane

using rope and padding, they managed to wrap Jane up in a blanket before strapping her in using the harness

“Right, that's done” Hopper smiled and put a cushion they had purchased from Melvald's next to Jane's head to ensure she didn't hit her head on the window. He wrapped her up in more blankets and clambered into the front seat where Max was waiting to restart their journey.

“She lied to us, she lied to *me*.” Max stated it quietly. Jane's perception of the sanctity of promises had rubbed off on Max and she found herself being as much of a believer in 'friends don't lie' as Jane had been, though it had been a while before she had found herself using that particular phrase as her entire life had been a lie, it had to be. “She promised she was safe but she wasn't” Max was breaking down and since she was the one driving the car Hopper decided to act

“Eliza, pull over”

“I... I'm fine” she knew she wasn't and she knew she didn't sound it either

“No, you're not fine, Max. Pull. Over.” His voice was stern, he never raised his voice at either of the girls, not since he had lost his temper with Jane back when she was in the cabin, an argument that had resulted in Jane leaving the cabin in a fit of rage.

“Fine, dad. But you're not doing much better. You can't drive either”

“I know. We're going to find a motel or something”

Sunday 10th April 1988

“Goodnight everyone” Steve called out from his room.

“Night!” a chorus of voices replied, he and Robin were in his room, Jonathan and Nancy were in another, Will, Dustin, and Lucas were in a third and Joyce was in his parents' room. He knew it was unlikely that they would be able to sleep but he and Joyce had managed to persuade them all to at least try, it was gone two in the morning.

A few hours later there was a knock at the door. “What the hell?” Steve clambered out of bed to open the door, glancing at his watch which showed it was barely five.

“Hey, Steve”

“Holy shit!! Guys? Everyone! SHITHEADS GET YOUR ASSES DOWN HERE NOW!!”